

An exploration of teaching strategies for junior high school Moral and Rule of Law courses under the perspective of interdisciplinary learning

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the value and significance of the junior high school "Morality and Rule of Law" course from an interdisciplinary learning perspective. Based on this analysis, it proposes a multidisciplinary approach to enhance students' knowledge experience, enrich interdisciplinary content, expand their knowledge systems, optimize interdisciplinary evaluation, and ensure the effectiveness of learning. These teaching strategies aim to facilitate the coordinated development of moral cognition and legal literacy through the interaction of knowledge across multiple domains.

KEYWORDS

interdisciplinary learning; junior high school "Morality and Rule of Law" course; teaching strategies

1 Introduction

At present, in the "Morality and Rule of Law" course at the junior high school stage, practical teaching activities obviously show a lack of practicality. Right now, in the "Morality and Rule of Law" course for junior high school, the practical teaching activities clearly lack real-world application. Given the current focus on developing students' essential skills, the old teaching method that mainly focuses on passing on knowledge is no longer enough for today's educational needs, so we really need to make some changes.

2 Basic overview

2.1 Interdisciplinary learning

Interdisciplinary learning is an educational paradigm that transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries. It integrates knowledge systems, research methods, and thinking patterns from multiple disciplines to cultivate learners' ability to solve comprehensive practicals.^[1] This model has three core characteristics: First, it emphasizes the intrinsic logical connections between disciplines, achieving systematic integration of knowledge domains; second, it is application-oriented, promoting effective knowledge transformation through task-driven activities in real-world contexts; finally, it focuses on the integrated development of thinking skills, guiding learners to construct multi-dimensional, three-dimensional cognitive frameworks.

2.2 The present situation of junior high school Moral and Rule of Law course

In the current implementation of the junior high school "Morality and Rule of Law" course, there is a widespread issue of monotonous teaching methods. Most classes still rely heavily on teacher-led lectures, using case studies from textbooks to explain legal concepts and moral norms, while students often passively absorb knowledge in this process.^[2] Although the textbook content includes modules such as civic education and foundations of rule of law, its connection with social hot topics and students' daily lives needs to be strengthened. Some teachers, due to limitations in their subject expertise, fail to effectively integrate relevant disciplinary knowledge from politics, history, psychology, and other fields when conducting situational teaching and case discussions. Moreover, the current evaluation system overly emphasizes the assessment of memorization-based knowledge, with relatively insufficient means for evaluating students' internalization of values and practical abilities in the rule of law.

3 The value and significance of the junior high school "Morality and Rule of Law" course under an interdisciplinary learning perspective

3.1 It is conducive to expanding students' thinking

The interdisciplinary teaching paradigm has significantly expanded the dimensions of junior high school "Morality and Rule of Law" courses, providing an innovative pathway for fostering students' comprehensive thinking skills. Instead of

just looking at laws and morals separately like in traditional teaching, interdisciplinary learning combines ideas from history, sociology, psychology, and other fields, changing the way students think from a simple view to a more complex one. For example, in the "Citizen Rights" unit, teachers can use historical perspectives to explain the trajectory of rights concepts, combine real-world cases to explore issues related to the boundaries of rights exercise, and apply psychological theories to analyze the psychological mechanisms behind the formation of rights awareness. This multidimensional teaching strategy breaks through the binary judgment model and helps guide students to delve deeper into the complex causes behind social phenomena, thereby systematically cultivating their dialectical thinking and critical analytical skills.

Interdisciplinary educational practices can effectively break down the cognitive boundaries between traditional disciplines, thereby promoting students' ability to integrate knowledge. For example, learners can use methods from language text analysis to dissect the focal points of legal cases or apply mathematical modeling thinking to clarify the logical connections in ethical decision-making. Through such approaches, learners' cognitive dimensions can be significantly expanded, and their grasp of theoretical concepts will deepen due to cross-disciplinary validation. This comprehensive mode of thinking cultivation can notably enhance students' overall competence in addressing complex real-world problems and provide a cognitive foundation for building a diverse and open value system.^[3]

3.2 It is conducive to enriching the knowledge structure

Traditional teaching methods, which focus on the interpretation of legal provisions and the instruction of moral principles, can lead to fragmented knowledge. In contrast, interdisciplinary teaching models integrate resources from multiple disciplines, such as history, geography, and biology to concretely present abstract concepts. For instance, in teaching environmental protection law, teachers can combine ecological theory from geography with research findings on species diversity from biology, enabling students to not only grasp legal provisions but also understand their scientific foundations and social significance.

By integrating interdisciplinary knowledge, learners can more accurately grasp the essential connections between various professional fields. For example, the mutual validation of legal norms and historical contexts helps students understand the social and historical conditions of the legislative process. It also enables them to perceive its contemporary value and apply principles from life sciences to discussions in moral philosophy, thereby deepening their understanding of bioethics issues to some extent. The knowledge system's expansion is shown in the widening of disciplinary boundaries and the systematic interconnections between concepts. It cultivates learners' ability to effectively integrate resources from multiple disciplines when dealing with complex real-world problems, broadening the dimensions of knowledge application and practical adaptability. The formation of this multidimensional knowledge framework lays a solid cognitive foundation for cultivating well-rounded citizens of contemporary society.

3.3 It is conducive to the cultivation of comprehensive ability

The teaching content of the "Morality and Rule of Law" course often requires students to consider multiple aspects, such as ethical value judgments, legal norms, cognition, and social practice applications. Integrating knowledge systems and thinking paradigms from different disciplines can foster students' ability to construct systematic problem-solving frameworks.

For instance, when exploring the theme of "Internet Speech Responsibility," students need to use the theory of rights and obligations in law for normative analysis, combine the principles of information dissemination from the field of information technology to understand the mechanisms of information spread, and leverage knowledge from psychology to analyze the motivations and social impacts of speech subjects. This multidimensional teaching training can provide students with a complete path for capability development, from identifying phenomena to analyzing their essence, from theoretical understanding to practical application.

At the same time, interdisciplinary teaching practices can effectively enhance students' comprehensive ability to convert theoretical knowledge into practical applications, integrating content such as regional development planning in geography and social phenomenon analysis in Chinese language studies. Learners can break through the limitations of traditional concept memorization and also use interactive forms like scenario simulations and role-playing to experience ethical judgments and legal practices in real-world scenarios.

Teaching practices under an interdisciplinary perspective have significantly improved students' critical thinking and social adaptability. In the process of integrating different disciplinary ways of thinking, students learn to examine social phenomena from a dialectical perspective, using legal thinking to protect legitimate rights and interests while achieving self-restraint through moral reflection. This model of capability cultivation aligns with the cognitive development patterns of young people, providing necessary support for them to grow into modern citizens with legal literacy and moral judgment.

4 Practice strategies of junior high school Moral and Rule of Law course under the perspective of interdisciplinary learning

4.1 Multidisciplinary approach to enhance students' knowledge experience

The main feature of the multidisciplinary teaching approach is to use a mix of teaching methods to break down the barriers between subjects, helping students develop a well-rounded understanding while connecting different areas of knowledge. Teachers should carefully combine important ideas from different subjects based on the main teaching topics, using methods like connecting themes, recreating situations, and organizing projects for designing the curriculum. Educators can introduce models of event analysis from history, spatial cognition paradigms from geography, and text interpretation strategies from language studies into the teaching domain to construct a diversified cognitive support system. Interdisciplinary learning can effectively reduce the cognitive load of higher-order concepts and leverage synergies between disciplines to promote learners' formation of systematic knowledge maps. When doing this, teachers should make sure that the different subjects work well together, rather than just adding them on top of each other, so that all the parts connect deeply under a common teaching goal. By creating open learning environments, teachers can help students independently explore connections between subjects through observation, comparison, and reasoning; enhance their understanding of ethical standards and legal principles; and shift teaching from simply sharing knowledge to helping students build meaning.

Teachers can design interdisciplinary activities by integrating subjects such as history, Chinese language, and information technology, using the teaching of "Basic Rights of Citizens" from the eighth-grade second-semester textbook of People's Education Press as an example. First, guide students to read articles like "Serving the People" from their Chinese textbooks to understand the historical background of rights awareness; then, combine this with the content on the "Development of the Constitution" in the history textbook to trace the legal evolution of citizens' rights; finally, introduce digital literacy knowledge from the information technology subject and organize students to simulate a "cyber rights protection scenario." For instance, design a task called "Resolving Online Shopping Disputes," requiring students to develop solutions from three aspects: legal provisions (basis for rights), communication scripts (Chinese expression), and evidence preservation (information technology). Through role-playing, peer evaluation of solutions, and other activities, students can not only grasp the core clauses of the Consumer Rights Protection Law but also understand the practical logic of exercising rights. At the same time, they will appreciate the application value of knowledge from different disciplines in real-world problems, ultimately forming a comprehensive understanding and multidimensional experience of citizens' rights.

4.2 Enrich interdisciplinary content and expand students' knowledge system

The key to enriching interdisciplinary content lies in systematically integrating knowledge resources from multiple fields and constructing a network of interconnected knowledge that aligns with course objectives.^[4] Teachers should anchor their teaching on the core concepts of "Morality and Rule of Law," exploring related elements from history, geography, science, and other disciplines. By reorganizing and extending these elements, they can create more expansive teaching content. For example, linking legal concepts with historical contexts ensures that interpretations are not isolated; combining moral issues with natural sciences strengthens value judgments with empirical support. This content design must adhere to the principles of "relevance" and "progression," ensuring both the intrinsic connection between interdisciplinary content and the course theme and the gradual progression based on students' cognitive levels. By creating a structure of "basic knowledge + additional knowledge," teachers can strengthen the main ideas of each subject while also deepening understanding through connections between different fields, helping students build a more complete knowledge system. When building this knowledge system, teachers need to emphasize the integration of different disciplinary thinking methods, such as applying causal analysis from history to evaluate moral events and using scientific empirical thinking to test the rationality of legal cases. This multidimensional training helps students break free from the limitations of a single perspective and learn to use a composite mindset to tackle complex problems.

Taking the teaching of "Perceiving the Meaning of Life" in the seventh-grade second-semester textbook of People's Education Press as an example, teachers can integrate content from biology, history, and Chinese to conduct interdisciplinary teaching. First, focus on the theme of "the uniqueness of life" in the textbook, introducing knowledge about "the uniqueness of DNA" from biology, and presenting individual uniqueness through scientific perspectives via educational videos. Next, connect with the "biographies of outstanding figures" in history, guiding students to analyze the paths of realizing life value for different historical figures. Finally, combine this lesson with essays such as "The Wisteria Waterfall" from the Chinese textbook, organizing students to write short essays titled "My Life Story," deepening their understanding of the meaning of life through literary expression. For instance, design a "Trilogy of Life Value" learning sheet: the first column for biological characteristics of life, the second column for life choices of historical figures, and the

third column for personalized reflections on life. By comparing and combining different subjects, students can learn the important lesson of "respecting life" and develop a well-rounded view of life's value from science, history, and literature, leading to a broader and deeper understanding of knowledge.

4.3 Optimize interdisciplinary evaluation to ensure the effect of learning knowledge

The core of optimizing interdisciplinary assessment lies in establishing a multi-dimensional evaluation mechanism, breaking through the traditional single-discipline evaluation model. Interdisciplinary teaching requires students to integrate knowledge from multiple fields to solve problems; therefore, evaluations should be conducted from three dimensions: "knowledge mastery," "interdisciplinary application ability," and "level of cognitive development." Teachers should design composite tools that include both formative and summative assessments, such as observing students' performance in knowledge transfer during group collaboration, analyzing their logical chains for problem-solving, and evaluating the completeness of interdisciplinary task outcomes, to comprehensively assess learning effectiveness. Evaluation criteria must balance core subject goals with interdisciplinary capability indicators, paying attention not only to the accuracy of students' understanding of legal provisions and moral norms but also to the rationality of their use of multidisciplinary methods to analyze problems. At the same time, introduce diverse evaluation methods such as self-assessment by students and peer review to strengthen reflective awareness and help students identify weak points in knowledge and directions for skill improvement through feedback, ultimately achieving the goal of "assessing to promote learning."

Teachers can design interdisciplinary evaluation tasks by integrating knowledge from information technology and psychology, using the teaching of "Reasonable Use of the Internet" from the eighth-grade first-semester textbook of People's Education Press as an example. Students are required to work in groups to complete a "Survey Report on Teenage Internet Behavior," which should include three parts: The first part involves using the knowledge of "Internet Rights and Obligations" from the "Morality and Law" course to analyze survey cases; the second part involves employing data processing methods from the information technology discipline to statistically analyze internet usage duration and behavior types; and the third part involves combining the theory of "Addiction Mechanisms" from psychology to propose behavioral improvement suggestions. The evaluation uses a rubric, scoring from four dimensions: "Application of Legal Knowledge (30%)," "Scientific Data Processing (25%)," "Feasibility of Suggestions (25%)," and "Interdisciplinary Logical Coherence (20%)." For instance, a group correctly cited relevant provisions of the "Protection of Minors Law" (legal dimension), used an Excel chart to present the distribution of daily internet usage time among class students (technical dimension), and designed an "Interest Shift" plan based on the principle of "Reinforcement by Proxy" from psychology (psychological dimension). Their interdisciplinary logic was rated as "excellent" by the teacher. Through such evaluations, students can clearly perceive the collaborative role of different disciplinary knowledge in solving practical problems, thereby enhancing their ability to integrate and apply knowledge comprehensively.

5 Concluding

In summary, interdisciplinary learning has injected new vitality into the junior high school "Morality and Rule of Law" course. Through systematic optimization of methods, content, and evaluation, it effectively promotes the coordinated development of students' knowledge, skills, and values. Future research needs to further refine the adaptation mechanisms for integrating different disciplines, continuously improve theoretical and practical systems, and help the course truly become an important vehicle for shaping students' core competencies.

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